

OPENSG USERS GROUP - MEETING SUMMARY

May 6, 2010

The OpenSG Users Group meeting is being held in Tysons Corner, Virginia this week of May 3, 2010. The **OpenSG** is a technical subcommittee of the **UCA International Users Group**. On Monday I participated in an introductory “boot camp” that gave an overview of the OpenSG and their mission. The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to very technical work sessions.

Background:

The **UCA International Users Group** is a not-for-profit corporation, consisting of utility user and supplier companies, that is dedicated to promoting the integration and interoperability of electric/gas/water utility systems through the use of international standards-based technology. The Users Group does not write standards, however works closely with those bodies that have primary responsibility for the completion of standards.

The **OpenSG User Group’s** mission is to foster enhanced functionality, lower costs, and speed up market adoption of Advanced Metering networks and Demand Response solutions. The group meets four times a year where users interact to obtain information on the progress of Open Smart Grid issues and to share their project experiences. Recognized experts share their insights and resolve key technical issues. Work is divided into four main areas: 1. Security, 2. Communications, 3. SG Systems, and 4. Conformance.

Summary of Boot Camp:

There were approximately 80 participants at the Boot Camp session representing a broad range of Smart Grid stakeholders including PG&E, SCE, Duke, Google, Itron, and Enernex (Erich Gunter was present). Almost everyone in attendance holds a highly technical position within their organization.

Chris Knudsen of PG&E presented a history of OpenSG and their role in facilitating the development of open Smart Grid standards. He explained that the OpenSG activities and work revolve around two key principles:

1. Without open standards, Smart Grid will not be achieved.
2. Without industry compliance, Smart Grid interoperability will not be achieved.

The OpenSG does not develop standards; rather they develop requirements and use cases revolving around open standards that are then passed on to standards development organizations (SDOs). Chris Knudsen described how the OpenSG works through an open and transparent process that is:

- Non political.
- Technology and SDO neutral.
- Open-standards based.
- Consensus / majority driven. Anyone can join; one member = one vote.
- User-based and fact driven (get in the room and delve past bias, rhetoric, and back door politics to make decisions based on fact).

Due to limited resources, the OpenSG develops work only in areas where there is a current need. Efforts are coordinated with other organizations to maximize efficiency and avoid redundant work; ex. their activities are mapped to the NIST process. The OpenSG works very closely with NIST and Enernex through the NIST process; in fact, they are the lead / co-lead on many of the NIST Priority Action Plans (PAPS).

The OpenSG is steadily growing with over 155 corporate members of which 15 are EEI members.

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